

APPROVED BY
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
AT THEIR MEETING OF
May 30, 2006

Town of Wenham
Wenham Board of Selectmen
Public Hearing of Tuesday, May 02, 2006
Bessie Buker Multi Media Room ~ 7 p.m.

Present: Present: Tom Tanous, Chair; Peter Hersee; Don Pickard
Also Present: Jeff Chelgren, Town Administrator; Pierre Erhard, Tree Warden; Catherine
Tinsley, Secretary
National Grid representatives, Larry Hammond and Ken Finch.

Mr. Hammond briefly explained that the National Grid's "Improvement Project" planned for Route 97 in Wenham is to restore reliability to transmission lines by removing dead, diseased, rotted, or otherwise unhealthy trees that threaten the electrical wires on both private property and the town's right of way at a cost of \$30,000-\$40,000 to National Grid. He identified that approximately forty town trees and sixty privately owned trees along Topsfield Road are marked for removal or pruning by licensed Arborists. Mr. Hammond told the Selectmen that this program will restore the reliability of the power lines by eliminating any branches or trees that potentially threaten the wires, and indicated that there is a 40% improvement to service where this program is done. He went on to say that Wenham has the worst performing circuits in the area.

Mr. Hammond stated that National Grid has gone door to door along Topsfield Road and has signed permission slips from property owners and their neighbors for all privately owned trees scheduled and tagged for removal, adding that the Tree Warden has approved the list of trees to be cut down, which are also identified by species, size, and location.

Mr. Erhard said that he has been working with National Grid on the project, and agrees with the trees marked for the project, saying that these trees will affect the lines at some time because they are weak, rotted or have potential to cause damage from high winds or snow loads.

He added that National Grid will be replacing some trees in the area, and they will be planted in area's that will not affect the power lines when they mature.

Mr. Finch also identified that the trimming and pruning of an additional seventy trees is a part of this project, adding that trimming/pruning is limited to one or two branches that could drop on a line.

Hugo Smith – 120 Topsfield Road questioned National Grid regarding the contact method used to talk with property owners.

National Grid responded that two contact attempts were made specifically at 120 Topsfield Road and that no trees will be removed without the signed permission of the property owner and the adjoining neighbor. National Grid will continue to try to contact Mr. Smith.

Warren Woods - 13 Topsfield Road said that National Grid plans on the removal of many pine trees in the front of home, which he claimed are healthy and do not threaten the power lines. He went on to offer to identify trees that envelop the wires that are not scheduled for removal. National Grid representatives agreed to put a hold on this property and meet with Mr. Woods for further discussion. It was noted that the concern with the trees is not the immediate threat but the potential problems as the trees continue to grow.

Mr. Erhard told the Selectmen that the Town will receive a \$2500 grant from National Grid for replanting with compatible species that will not become future hazards. He identified that 8-10 good size trees can be purchased with this amount, not including the planting.

Mr. Hammond added that the town is benefiting from the removal of diseased and dead trees at no cost to the town.

At the request of Mr. Tanous, retired tree warden, Albi Dodge recommended that the Locust trees along the Beverly line be topped instead of being removed and that the Elm trees with Dutch Elm disease be removed.

Ken Whittaker – Enon Road identified that he is not a property owner along Topsfield Road but questioned if the tree stumps will be flush cut or removed and if homeowners are compensated for tree replacement. National Grid confirmed that the stumps will be flush cut, unless it a public hazard, then they will be ground. Homeowners do not get any compensation for trees removed from their property but again benefit from the removal of dead or diseased trees.

Mr. Tanous and Mr. Hersee requested a walk through with National Grid's representative and the Tree Warden and a meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, May 10th at 10 a.m.

7:35 p.m. The Public Hearing adjourned.